

Muhammad
Messenger of Allah

Ash-Shifa of Qadi 'Iyad

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PART THREE

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This part is the secret of the book and the core of its fruit. What comes before it lays the foundation and provides the proofs for the clear anecdotes we will relate in it. It governs what follows it and accomplishes the goal of this book. When its promise is put to the test and its duty fulfilled, the breast of the accursed enemy will be constricted and the heart of the believer will shine with certainty and its lights will fill his breast. The man of intellect will then value the Prophet as he should be valued.

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Thus the book ends: a bright light on the brow of belief, a priceless pearl in the crown of clarification, removing every confusion and clarifying every conjecture, a healing for the breasts of the believers. It brings the truth out into the open and confronts the ignorant with it.

I seek help with Allah - there is no god but Him.

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Chapter One

ALLAH'S PRAISE OF HIM AND HIS GREAT ESTEEM FOR HIM

This chapter is an exposition of some of the clearest *ayats* in the Book of Allah which speak well of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, enumerate his good qualities and Allah's esteem of him, and praise him.

SECTION 1

Concerning praise of him and his numerous excellent qualities

Allah says: **"A Messenger has come to you from among yourselves."** (9:128)¹

Allah informs the believers, or the Arabs, or the people of Makka, or all people (according to different commentaries on the meaning of these words) that He has sent to them from among themselves a Messenger whom they know, whose position they are sure of and whose truthfulness and trustworthiness they cannot but recognise. Therefore, since he is one of them, they should not suspect him of lying or of not giving them good counsel. There is no Arab tribe without descent from, or kinship with, the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. This, according to Ibn 'Abbas and others, is the meaning of His words, **"except love for kin"** (42:23). He is from the noblest, highest and most excellent of them. How much further in the *ayat* can praise go?

Then Allah continues the *ayat* by attributing to him all kinds of praiseworthy qualities and greatly praises his eagerness to guide people to Islam, his deep concern for the intensity of what afflicts and harms them in this world and the Next, and his compassion and mercy for the believers.

One of the men of knowledge, Al-Husayn ibn al-Fadl, said, "He honoured him with two of His own names: the "compassionate" and the "merciful" (*ra'uf, rahim*)". The same point is made in another *ayat*: **"Allah was kind to the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from among themselves."** (3:164) Another *ayat* says: **"He is the One who sent a Messenger from you among the unlettered people."** (62:2) Allah also

1. As-Samarqandi said that some people read it (a *shadhdh* reading from 'A'isha and Fatima) as *min anfasikum* (from the most precious among you) rather than *min anfusikum* (from among yourselves) but the latter is the more common reading.

says: **"As We sent among you a Messenger from you."** (2:151)

It is related that 'Ali said that the words of Allah, **"from among yourselves"** mean "...by lineage, relationship by marriage and descent. There was no fornicator among his forefathers from the time of Adam. All of them were properly married."

Ibn al-Kalbi said, "I wrote down five hundred female ancestors of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and I did not find any fornication among them nor any of the evils which were prevalent in the *Jahiliyya* period."

Ibn 'Abbas said that the words of Allah, **"when you turn about among those who prostrate,"** (26:219) mean "from Prophet to Prophet until I brought you out as a Prophet."¹

Ja'far ibn Muhammad [as-Sadiq] said, "Allah knew that His creatures would not be capable of pure obedience to Him, so He told them this in order that they would realise that they would never be able to achieve absolute purity in serving Him. Between Himself and them He placed one of their own species, clothing him in His own attributes of compassion and mercy. He brought him out as a truthful ambassador to creation and made it such that when someone obeys him, they are obeying Allah, and when someone agrees with him, they are agreeing with Allah. Allah says: **'Whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah.'** (4:80)"

Allah says, **"We did not send you except as a mercy to all the worlds."** (21:107) Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Tahir said in explanation of this *ayat*, "Allah imbued Muhammad with mercy, so that his very being was mercy and all his qualities and attributes were mercy to all creatures. Whoever is touched by any aspect of his mercy is saved in both worlds from every hateful thing and obtains everything he loves. Do you not see that Allah says, **'We did not send you except as a mercy to all the worlds.'**? His life was mercy and his death was mercy. As the Prophet himself said, 'My life is a blessing for you and my death is a blessing for you.'² The Prophet also said, 'When Allah desires mercy for a community, He takes its Prophet to Him before them and He makes him one who goes ahead to prepare the way for them.'³

As-Samarqandi explains that the words **"a mercy to all the worlds"** mean for both the *jinn* and mankind. It is also said that it means for all creation. He is a mercy to the believers by guiding them, a mercy to the hypocrites by granting them security from being killed, and a mercy to the unbelievers by deferring their punishment. Ibn 'Abbas said, "He is a mercy to the believers and also to

1. As in Ibn Sa'd, al-Bazzar and Abu Nu'aym.

2. From al-Harith ibn Abi Usama in al-Bazzar with a sound *isnad*.

3. Muslim.

the unbelievers since they are saved from what befell the other communities who cried lies."

It is related that the Prophet said to Jibril, "Has any of this mercy touched you?" He replied, "Yes, I used to have fear about what would happen to me, but now I feel safe because of the way Allah praised me when He said, **'Securely placed with the Lord of the Throne, obeyed there, trustworthy..'**" (81:21)¹

It is related that Ja'far as-Sadiq said that the words of Allah, **"Peace be upon you!" from the Companions of the Right**" (56:91) mean "because of you, Muhammad." The cause of their peace is the high honour bestowed upon Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

Allah says, **"Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The likeness of His Light is that of a niche in which there is a lamp, the lamp inside a glass, the glass like a brilliant star, lit from a blessed tree, an olive, neither of the east nor of the west, its oil all but giving off light even if no fire touches it. Light upon Light. Allah guides to His Light anyone He wills and Allah makes likenesses for mankind and Allah has knowledge of everything."** (24:35)

Ka'b al-Ahbar and Ibn Jubayr said, "By the second light He means Muhammad. Allah says, **'the likeness of his light...'** meaning the light of Muhammad."

Sahl ibn 'Abdullah at-Tustari said that it means that Allah is the Guide of the people of the heavens and the earth. Then Sahl said, "...like the light of Muhammad when it is lodged in the loins like a niche. By the lamp He means his heart. The glass is his breast. It is as if it were a brilliant star because of the belief and wisdom it contains, lit from a blessed tree, i.e. from the light of Ibrahim. He makes a comparison with the blessed tree and He says, **'Its oil all but giving off light,'** i.e. Muhammad's prophethood is almost evident to the people before he speaks, just like this oil."

A lot more is said about this *ayat*, and Allah knows best what it means.

Elsewhere in the Qur'an, Allah calls his Prophet a light and a light-giving lamp. He says, **"A light and a Clear Book have come to you from Allah."** (5:15) Allah also says, **"We sent you as a witness, a bringer of good news and a warner, one who calls to Allah with His permission and a light-giving lamp."** (33:46)

This is why He says: **"Did We not expand your breast for you?"** (94:1) To expand, '*sharaha*', is to make wide, vast. By the word "breast", Allah here means the heart. Ibn 'Abbas said, "He expanded it with the light of Islam." Sahl at-Tustari said, "With the light of the message." Hasan al-Basri said, "He filled it with judgement and knowledge." It is also said that it means, "Did We not

1. This tradition is not found in the books of *hadith*.

purify your heart so that it does not allow in any whispering from Shaytan?"

The *sura* continues: **"And We lifted your burden from you, the burden that weighed down your back."** (94:2-3) It is said that this means his wrong actions, i.e. from the time before he was a Prophet. It is said that it means the burden of the days of the *Jahiliyya*. It is said that the meaning is the message which weighed down his back before he conveyed it, and this is the opinion of al-Mawardi and as-Sulami. It is also said that it means, "We protected you and if it had not been for that, wrong actions would have burdened your back," and this is what as-Samarqandi relates

The *sura* continues: **"Did We not raise high your renown?"** (94:4) Yahya ibn Adam said that this meant by being given prophethood. It is said that the meaning of these words is explained by the *hadith qudsi*, "When I am mentioned, you are mentioned with Me in the statement, 'There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.'" It is also said that the same is done by means of the *adhan*.

What is clear is that by these words Allah confirms the immensity of the favour He has bestowed on His Prophet, his noble station with Him and the honour in which He holds him. He expanded his breast to belief and guidance and made it wide enough to contain knowledge and bear wisdom. He removed from him the burdens of all the things of the *Jahiliyya* and made their pursuance hateful to him by giving victory to His *deen* over all other *deens*. He lightened for him the weighty responsibility of the message and prophethood so he could convey to people what was sent down to him. He re-emphasised the sublime position, majestic rank, high renown of His Prophet and joined his name to His own name.

Qatada said, "Allah exalted his fame in this world and the Next. There is no speaker, witness nor anyone doing the prayer who fails to say, 'There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.'"

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri related that the Prophet said, "Jibril, peace be upon him, came to me and said, 'My Lord and your Lord says, "Do you know how I have exalted your fame?" ' I said, 'Allah and His Messenger know best.' He said, 'When I am mentioned, you are mentioned with Me.'"¹

Ibn 'Ata' quoted a *hadith qudsi* saying, "I completed belief with your being mentioned with Me." And another one which says, "I have made your mention part of My mention so whoever mentions Me, mentions you."

Ja'far ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq said, "No-one mentions you as the Messenger but that he mentions Me as the Lord."

Some of the people of knowledge, such as al-Mawardi, suggested that the Station of Intercession was being referred to by this.

1. In the *Sahih* of Ibn Hibban and the *Musnad* of Abu Ya'la.